

## WALKING IN A WINTER WONDERLAND NORMANDALE LAKE IS INVITING ANY TIME

Normandale Lake is a beautiful place to visit any time of year. It is a serene setting, even in the winter when the lake and surrounding landscape are covered in snow, as this image of a freshly plowed trail near the lake, submitted to the City's website by resident Mark Madsen, illustrates.

In 1978, the City's Mount Normandale Lake Water Management Project created an artificial 135-acre, 10-foot-deep lake that became known as Normandale Lake. Although most people today appreciate the lake and surrounding district for its beauty

and recreational opportunities such as fishing, hiking and biking, it was originally created for a more practical purpose – to protect nearby properties and infrastructure from flooding.

When a storm dropped 14 inches of rain on Bloomington in 1987, Normandale Lake absorbed most of the water and prevented significant downstream flooding and damage from loss of property.

To submit photos of what you think are Bloomington's most beautiful places, visit the City's website.

**WEBSITE KEYWORDS: SUBMIT PHOTOS.**



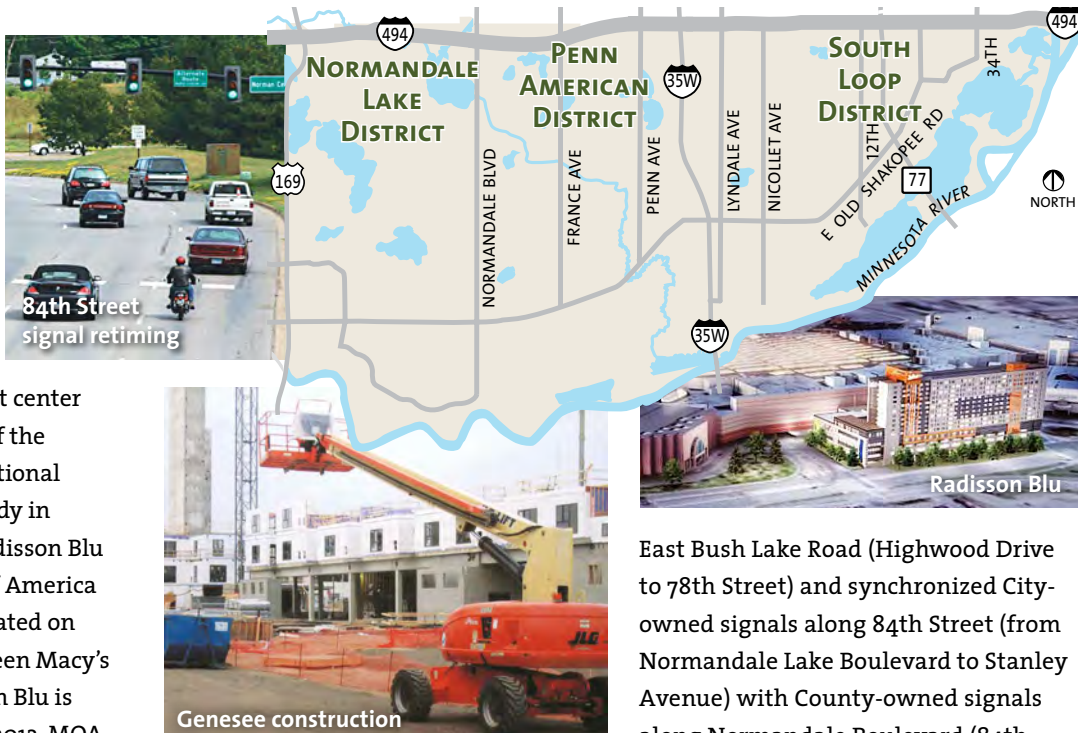
## WHAT'S DEVELOPING?

### PLANS MOVE FORWARD IN BLOOMINGTON'S THREE MAJOR DISTRICTS

Major improvements in the city's three major destination districts – South Loop, Penn-American and Normandale Lake – continue forward in 2012.

In the **SOUTH LOOP DISTRICT**, an important commercial and employment center located immediately south of the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, construction is already in progress on the 501-room Radisson Blu Hotel, adjacent to the Mall of America (MOA). The hotel will be situated on the south side of MOA, between Macy's and Bloomingdale's. Radisson Blu is scheduled to open in March 2013. MOA announced that Bloomingdale's will close this year and be replaced by several new stores.

South Loop's Lindau Lane project is underway with construction scheduled to begin in the spring. Lindau Lane currently runs between MOA and retailer IKEA, from TH 77



east to 24th Avenue. The Lindau Lane improvement project will extend the street to 30th Avenue and incorporate safety improvements to reduce crashes near IKEA Way – Bloomington's highest-crash intersection. It will also make the area more pedestrian friendly. The entire project will create 350 on-site and 650 indirect (off-site supplier and manufacturing) jobs.

In the **PENN-AMERICAN DISTRICT**, Bloomington-based developers StuartCo and United Properties are building "Genesee," a mixed-use retail and residential development on the southeast corner of Penn Avenue and American Boulevard. The developers teamed with the Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority on the project. When completed in fall 2012, the first phase will include 212 apartments and 22 townhomes. The residential units will be rented.

Last August, a major signal coordination project was completed in the **NORMANDALE LAKE DISTRICT**. The project coordinated signal timing along

East Bush Lake Road (Highwood Drive to 78th Street) and synchronized City-owned signals along 84th Street (from Normandale Lake Boulevard to Stanley Avenue) with County-owned signals along Normandale Boulevard (84th Street to Old Shakopee Road).

Traffic signal coordination is a retiming tool that synchronizes the start of green lights at intersections along a corridor, enabling a group of vehicles to travel together through multiple signals with minimal or no stops. Retiming is one of the most cost-effective ways to improve traffic flow and reduce travel time for motorists.

In addition, traffic signal coordination timing plans were implemented along I-494 and American Boulevard to improve traffic flow with the north and south corridors of Penn, Lyndale, Nicollet and 12th avenues. Additional coordination projects are planned in 2012 for South Loop and Lyndale Avenue.

For more information on South Loop, scan the QR code below. For more on the Penn-American and Normandale Lake districts, visit the development map on the City's website.

**WEBSITE KEYWORDS: DEVELOPMENT MAP.**



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When you see **WEBSITE KEYWORDS**, go to [www.ci.bloomington.mn.us](http://www.ci.bloomington.mn.us) for more information.



## VISIT THE CLUBHOUSE DWAN IS OPEN YEAR-ROUND

The weather may not be good for golfing, but you don't have to be a golfer to enjoy the Dwan Clubhouse, which is open for business year-round. Visit the clubhouse, 3301 West 110th Street, for breakfast or lunch five days a week. Card players are welcome. Winter hours are Monday - Friday, 7 a.m. - 3 p.m. For more information, call 952-563-8702.

**WEBSITE KEYWORD: DWAN.**

## BORN AGAIN JOCKS ENJOY INDOOR VOLLEYBALL

The Born Again Jocks volleyball league welcomes men, 55 years and older, of all skill levels, to enjoy volleyball at Jefferson High School, 4001 West 102nd Street.

For more information, contact Don Wilkie at 952-884-2146 or Don Wagoner at [doje65@netzero.net](mailto:doje65@netzero.net).



## JUST SAY "NO" OPT OUT OF JUNK MAIL

Did you know each year, the average household in the United States receives more than 100 pounds of unwanted, unsolicited mail? That's nearly 10 million tons of unsolicited, unwanted mail discarded nationally.

Get your name off of junk mail lists. Visit [www.RethinkRecycling.com](http://www.RethinkRecycling.com) for more information.

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The *Briefing*, published bimonthly by the City of Bloomington, is mailed to our residents and businesses. Direct comments and requests for Braille, larger print or computer disk to Communications Administrator Janine Hill, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3027; PH 952-563-8819; TTY 952-563-8740; FAX 952-563-8715; [E-MAIL jhill@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:Jhill@ci.bloomington.mn.us). [Website: www.ci.bloomington.mn.us](http://www.ci.bloomington.mn.us)

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The City of Bloomington complies with all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its services, programs, or activities. Upon request, accommodation will be provided to allow individuals with disabilities to participate in all City of Bloomington services, programs, and activities. The City has designated coordinators to facilitate compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and to coordinate compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as mandated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations. For more information, contact the Human Services Division, City of Bloomington, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington, MN 55431-3027; 952-563-8733 (Voice); 952-563-8740 (TTY). Upon request, this information can be available in Braille, large print, audio tape and/or electronic format.

HERE’S TO OUR HEALTH!  
RESOLVING TO HAVE A HAPPIER, HEALTHIER NEW YEAR

By Mayor Gene Winstead

The City is kicking off 2012 with a resolution to build a healthier community. What does a healthy Bloomington look like? It starts with providing opportunities to increase physical activity and offering healthier food options to make healthy choices easier and part of our everyday lives. A healthy Bloomington is also strong financially.

The past few months, the City has been working with Richfield, Edina and Blue Cross and Blue Shield (BCBS) of Minnesota on a new initiative to remove barriers to healthy living in our communities and support people in their efforts to be healthier. The *do.town* initiative focuses on preventing illness caused by unhealthy eating and physical inactivity with the goal of creating a healthier Bloomington where people can thrive.

We’ve already begun our journey. Because the City is financially healthy, we can provide resources and services such as new pedestrian and bike trails along East Bush Lake Road and portions of 86th Street, a successful Farmers Market, community gardens and more.

In 2008, the City implemented the Alternative Transportation Plan, which encourages walking and biking and increases quality of life for all Bloomington residents. The plan includes recommendations for building more trails and improving existing trails, walkways and other pedestrian-level infrastructure. In addition, the City Council passed an ordinance to reduce traffic congestion and pollution, and to encourage active forms of transportation such as biking, walking and using transit.

The City passed a Complete Streets resolution to support statewide efforts.

We are currently looking at creating a Complete Streets policy and program for the City. We are also looking at ways to offer healthier food choices at City concession stands and events.

Through community partnerships and grants from the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) led by Bloomington Public Health with leaders in Edina and Richfield, we’ve been able to support active living by installing more bike racks around the city and healthy eating by expanding community gardens, providing workshops and helping childcare centers adopt healthy habits. The City recently received a grant of \$840,000 from the State of Minnesota to continue SHIP activities and a federal grant of \$185,000 from the Centers for Disease Control to further support these initiatives.

SHIP funding has assisted the City in establishing a foundation for these efforts over the last two years – fostering changes in the community, schools, worksites and healthcare settings. But our work has just begun. The City’s public-private collaboration with BCBS will enable us to amplify our work and engage more citizens in making sustainable changes to meet our health goals. For this effort to be successful, we need your help. We want to do our part within our City infrastructure, as well as the broader community, but we hope that residents, schools and businesses will also come onboard and commit to making Bloomington a healthier place for everyone.

Sign up to stay current on what’s happening with the *do.town* initiative. Scan the QR code *at right* or visit [www.do-town.org](http://www.do-town.org).



LEAVING A LEGACY OF SERVICE  
COUNCILMEMBER AMY GRADY STEPS DOWN

During former Councilmember Amy Grady’s first City Council meeting more than eight years ago, she was asked: “Can you please help us ban smoking?” It was a question that began months of work with other metro-area cities, culminating in July 2004 with the City Council passing a comprehensive smoke-free ordinance for all work and public places in Bloomington, which eventually led to a statewide smoking ban.

This was just one of the many accomplishments that Grady, who was elected to the At-Large seat in 2003, took with her upon completing her final term on the City Council in January. Grady said she considered her work on the City Council to be very personal.

“I’ve always had a personal connection to my work,” she said. “Sitting on a front step with a concerned mom watching traffic, led me to take steps to get traffic reduced. These day-to-day issues are where I think I made the biggest impact.”

Grady, an attorney, has served on a number of boards and committees in Bloomington, including the Bloomington Charter Commission, Bloomington Planning Commission and Chamber of Commerce. Grady will continue to make an impact through her work as commissioner on the Bloomington Port Authority. Yet, she will miss serving on the City Council.

“Part of what’s neat about being a councilmember is the ability to drive around town and know exactly what’s

going on,” Grady said. “I’ll miss being in the loop, but most of all, I will miss the people and the City staff. The integrity of the other councilmembers and a desire to give back was what first inspired me to run while my four sons were still in school.”

With fewer obligations and her nest empty, Grady plans on spending more time pursuing hobbies such as cooking, gardening and playing the oboe. Recently, Grady took a vacation to Italy.

“I hope there will be more travel with my husband in the future,” she said. “It’s a new chapter in our lives.”





# HOME IMPROVEMENT FAIR

## LEARN HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR HOME

The City of Bloomington will host its 10th Home Improvement Fair, **Saturday, February 25, 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.**, at Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road.

If you're considering making home improvements, you should attend this free event. Fairgoers will see a variety of home improvement exhibits, have questions answered by home improvement professionals and get ideas for remodeling projects.

In addition to the exhibits, there will be 16 free how-to seminars covering a

variety of topics, a kids' workshop and presentations by "The Organizing Guy" Bill Bliesath.

In 2010, 1,800 people visited the Home Improvement Fair and this year is expected to attract even more.

To receive the latest Home Improvement Fair news, scan the QR code *at right* or visit the City's website and click on [E-Subscribe](#) to sign up for e-mail updates. For more information, visit our website, call the Housing and Redevelopment Authority



Program at 952-563-8937 or e-mail [hra@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:hra@ci.bloomington.mn.us).

**WEBSITE KEYWORDS:**  
**HOME FAIR.**



# HUMAN RESOURCES

## DIRECTOR APPOINTED

### KAY McALONEY BEGINS

The City recently appointed a new Human Resources Director to replace Kent Michaelson, who retired last fall. Kay McAloney, who began at the City in January, comes to Bloomington from Washington County, where she served as human resources director since 2003.



McAloney has previous experience as human resources director for the cities of Brooklyn Park, Anoka and Ramsey. Additionally, she worked as personnel advisor for the League of Minnesota Cities. She has more than 20 years of experience in employee and labor relations, recruitment and retention, employee development and benefits, performance management and policy administration. She holds a master's degree in human resources and industrial relations from the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota. McAloney is a member of several associations. She currently serves as a board member of the International Public Management Association, where she served previously as president.

"I look forward to having the opportunity to work with everyone at the City, McAloney said. "I've learned that Kent Michaelson left some big shoes to fill, but thankfully he left us with a great, experienced staff."

# SAFETY REMINDER

## KEEP SIDEWALKS CLEAR



Many people rely on sidewalks to get where they need to go. Keeping sidewalks clear of snow and other objects such as recycling bins ensures safe travel for everyone.

The City asks that all residents and business owners help in keeping public sidewalks free of fresh snow, as well as any snow that may be deposited as a result of snow removal from streets and driveways. In addition, it is illegal for any vehicle to block a public sidewalk.

# MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD

## PRODUCE YOUR OWN TV SHOW

Are you interested in video production? Why not produce your own TV show on Bloomington Public Access Television (BCAT)?

Annual memberships are \$45 for individuals, \$15 for students and \$125 for organizations. For more information, visit [www.bcat16.org](http://www.bcat16.org) or call Production Specialist Gina Simmons at 952-563-4980.

**WEBSITE KEYWORD: BCAT.**

# LEARNING THE RULES OF THE ROAD

## HOW TO NAVIGATE BLOOMINGTON'S THREE-LANE STREETS

As part of ongoing efforts to manage traffic speeds, accommodate anticipated increases in traffic volume and balance vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle needs, the City has converted some four-lane streets to two and three lanes. While most drivers have easily adapted to navigating three-lane streets, they may be confusing for those who have not driven on them.

In a three-lane street configuration such as 86th Street, the center lane is used only for turning, not for passing. It is illegal for a driver to cross the solid yellow line in the middle to pass a vehicle or to go around a vehicle making a right turn. However, if a vehicle such as a transit bus or garbage truck is pulled over on the shoulder and there is adequate space in the two-way left turn

lane to safely proceed around them, you may do so cautiously. This does not apply to school buses. Drivers must always stop for school buses when the stop sign arm is extended.

The center lane is always shared, for the purpose of making left turns, by traffic traveling in both directions. To turn left from the center lane, make sure the lane is clear, signal, look over your shoulder, and move completely inside the center left turn lane. Wait in the turn lane until the opposing lane is clear and then turn only when it is safe; be aware that other vehicles may also be using the left turn lane.

In addition, as indicated by the "No Parking" signs, there is generally no parking allowed on three-lane streets. For more information, call Civil Engineer Amy Marohn at 952-563-4532.



# FINANCIAL UPDATE

## CITY COUNCIL APPROVES 2012 PROPERTY TAX LEVY

In an effort to maintain an affordable price for City services, the City Council adopted a property tax levy for 2011 of \$44,444,371, a decrease of 0.25 percent from 2010. Other communities in Hennepin County either had no increase or up to an 8 percent increase in their levies.

Based on this tax levy, the City's portion of 2012 total residential property taxes is approximately 29 percent.

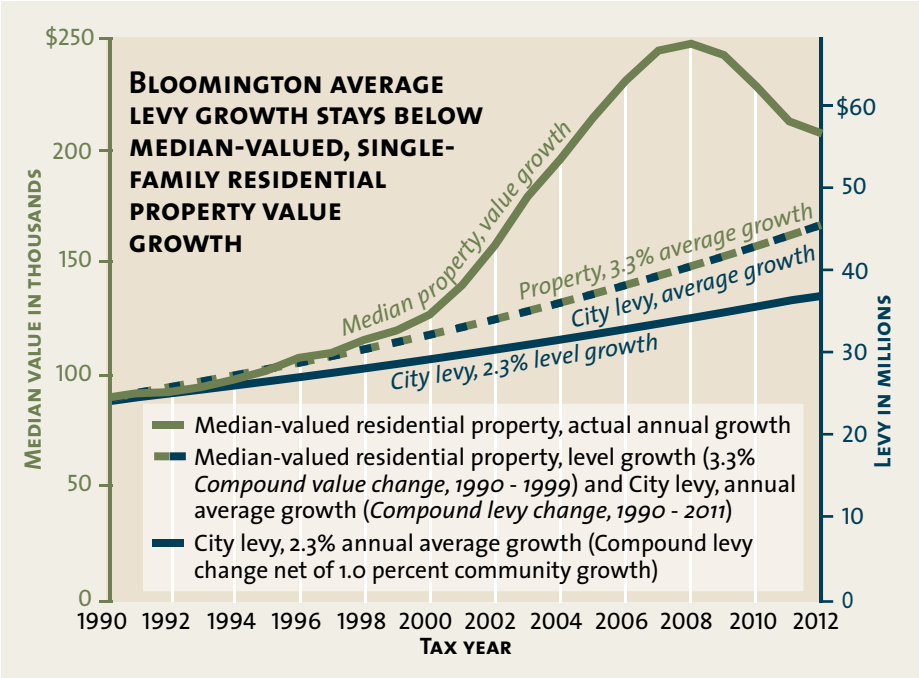
The City's objective is to maintain the monthly cost of City services at the same level as in 2010 and 2011 – \$67.82 – for the owner of a median-valued home, which for 2011 was \$207,300.

Some homeowners saw the value of their properties decrease and their portions of local taxes increase. This is because there is not a direct correlation between property values and property taxes as there is between sales and

income taxes. Governments in Minnesota levy a total property tax dollar amount; they do not set the tax rate, as found in some states. In the property tax system, market value is used to create a proportionate share of the tax levy. In other words, a person's tax bill is a factor of how all other properties in the city change in value. The average median-valued property decreased 2.6 percent in value for taxes payable in 2012. The City tax for a median-valued home with the approved levy should stay flat compared to the 2011 tax. If your property maintained its value better than the median-valued home, your share of the tax levy most likely showed an increase.

Home sales in 2010 continued to reflect the housing downturn and are the basis for the 2011 assessment for taxes payable in 2012. Home sales in 2011 will be the basis for 2013 taxes. Total market value for all Bloomington properties was at \$11.2 billion for taxes payable in 2010, dropped to \$10.3 billion for 2011 and to \$10.1 billion for 2012.

For more information, contact Chief Financial Officer Lori Economy-Scholler at 952-563-8791 or [leconomy@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:leconomy@ci.bloomington.mn.us).







Earth Action Heroes protect the earth. Whether it's saving energy or guarding Bloomington's precious natural resources, these individuals are making a difference. Here are your neighbors in action...

EARTH ACTION HEROES  
HAZARDOUS WASTE WARRIORS

ENVIRONMENTAL  
STEWARDSHIP  
PROTECTING OUR VALUABLE  
NATURAL RESOURCES

The City was recently awarded the Environmental Stewardship Award from the Minnesota Chapter of the American Public Works Association for its efforts in environmental sustainability. These efforts have included installation of rainwater gardens throughout the city, pictured above, prairie restoration and maintenance, and much more.

The award is given annually to groups or individuals in Public Works who exhibit a passion for conserving and protecting the environment.

For more information about the City's efforts to promote sustainability, visit the City's website.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: SUSTAINABILITY.

REDUCE YOUR EXPOSURE  
USE SAFER PRODUCTS



You can reduce exposure to harmful chemicals at home by purchasing fewer hazardous household products. Follow these green cleaning tips:

- Look for products that list all ingredients on the label. Generally, fewer ingredients are better.
- Use a multipurpose cleaner rather than buying many specialty cleaners.
- Try using products such as baking soda, white vinegar and lemon juice to clean.
- Choose products that are made from plant-based materials like citrus, vegetables, herbs or pine oils.
- Choose products that have low or no volatile organic compounds (VOCs). VOCs are toxic chemicals that are released into the air.
- When possible, choose chlorine-free products and water-based glues, adhesives and paints.

For more helpful tips, visit [www.rethinkrecycling.com](http://www.rethinkrecycling.com).

RECYCLE YOUR PAPER

Recycling reduces greenhouse gases that are harmful to the environment. In one year, recycling in Minnesota reduces emissions equal to taking a million cars off the road. Please do your part and recycle this Briefing after reading.

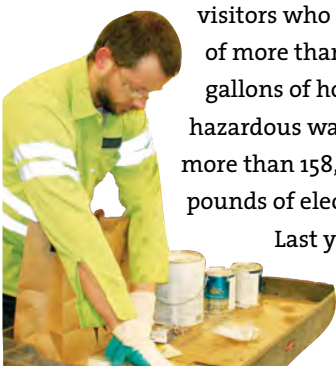


It may be February, but spring, a time for renewal and cleaning house, will be here before we know it. Perhaps you still have leftover gas or oil from your lawn mower, or half-empty cans of paint or solvents from last year still lying around? If you can't reuse them, you don't have to go far to recycle them.

Bring your old paint and any other hazardous materials taking up space in your home to the **South Hennepin County Problem Waste Drop-Off Center, 1400 West 96th Street**, where you will find Chemical Technicians Richard Jones, Nanette Ewald and David Guenther, pictured right, ready to safely dispose of them for you. Hennepin County's drop-off facility in Bloomington is a one-stop depot for recyclables, as well as "problem materials" including paint, fluorescent lamps and mercury thermostats. Each month, the center sees more than 5,000

visitors who dispose of more than 20,000 gallons of household hazardous waste and more than 158,000 pounds of electronics.

Last year, the county added CDs,



DVDs and other electronic media to its expanding list of accepted materials.

According to Supervisor of Household Hazardous Waste and Problem Materials Amy Roering, in 2011, electronics were the most popular drop-off item, followed by latex paint.

"Safe disposal of household hazardous waste is a high priority for safeguarding our quality of life, and we are heartened to see that the number of people dropping off materials in Bloomington has nearly doubled since 2000 and continues to grow every year," Roering said.

The facility opened in 1993 and was expanded to 25,000 square feet in 2004 to accommodate growing customer demand. Two county employees and nine contract employees work receiving waste and managing operations.

"Customers who come here receive personal service at their vehicles from highly skilled employees who ensure that each material is collected safely and shipped off-site for recycling or proper disposal," Roering said.



Some materials are not shipped off to be recycled. An almost full can of paint, for example, may be placed on a "free items" shelf at the center, where customers can take what they need.

Materials accepted at the facility include automotive fluids, batteries, electronics cleaners, mercury-containing items, pool chemicals, paint and much more. Appliances are accepted for a fee. For a complete list of accepted items visit the City's website. Hours are Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., Wednesdays, 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. and Saturdays, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. The facility is closed on Sundays, Mondays and holidays. For more information, visit the City's website.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: RECYCLING CENTER.

LIGHTEN YOUR LOAD

2012 CITYWIDE CURBSIDE CLEANUP

GET READY TO DECLUTTER!

The Citywide Curbside Cleanup is right around the corner. Be sure you're prepared by setting your materials at the curb before 7 a.m. on your pickup day.

Seniors and disabled residents should contact their Neighborhood Watch block captains or call Human Services, 952-563-8733, TTY 952-563-8740, for assistance. Requests for assistance must be made at least one week in advance. See the April Briefing for more details.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: CLEANUP.

2012 CLEAN UP SCHEDULE

East of Portland	Saturday, April 14
Portland to Penn	Saturday, April 21
Penn to France	Saturday, April 28
France to Normandale	Saturday, May 5
West of Normandale	Saturday, May 12



To receive Curbside schedule reminders, scan the QR code below or visit the City's website, click on [E-Subscribe](#), and sign up for e-mail updates.



RESOLVE TO REUSE AND RECYCLE IN 2012  
DO YOUR PART TO REDUCE WASTE

Did you know the average person in the Twin Cities throws away an average of six pounds of garbage a day? That's enough to fill Target Field more than 25 times each year. Here are some steps you can take to reduce your waste:

- Look for less packaging and avoid disposables. At the grocery store, buy in bulk and bring your own bags.

- Compost your fruit and vegetable scraps, coffee grounds and egg shells in a backyard compost bin.
- Borrow, rent and shop used. Before you run to the store to buy a new item, think about how much you will use it.
- Purchase a reusable mug. Have coffee every day? Bring a reusable mug with you to the coffee shop.

- Sell, give away or donate usable clothing and household goods.

For more information, visit [www.rethinkrecycling.com](http://www.rethinkrecycling.com).





TO SERVE AND PROTECT

BPD’s K-9 UNIT  
MEET THE HARDEST WORKING DOGS IN TOWN

The canines accepted into Bloomington Police Department’s (BPD) K-9 Unit are members of an elite group of highly trained animals. Their great work ethic and high drive to succeed is as steadfast as their loyalty. Although they may look intimidating, according to their handlers, they are some of the most well-mannered canines you will ever meet.

Sergeant Jim Ousley has served as supervisor of the K-9 Unit for eight years.

“I have a lot of respect for these dogs,” he said. “It’s a great life, but working eight to 10-hour shifts and jumping in and out of squad cars isn’t easy.”



The K-9 Unit, which began in 1987, currently has six members, some coming from as far as the Czech Republic. Riggs and Hugo the Belgian Malinois, and Caine and Bosco the German shepherds, work in Patrol. Echo, a German shorthair, works as a bomb tracker at Mall of America. Breaker, a springer spaniel, works in the Narcotics Unit. The canines are most often used to search for people – both crime suspects and missing people – just don’t mistake them for bloodhounds.

“A common misconception is we give the dogs a piece of clothing belonging to a person and they run off to search for that scent,” Ousley said. “In reality, the dogs need a starting point. They pick up on disturbances in the ground and then a scent, so someone hiding in a wooded area where there is lots of ground cover is easy to find.”

Officer Mike Larson has handled two canines since he joined the K-9 Unit in 2005. His first canine, Paso, worked for an unprecedented 10 years before he passed away last spring. Larson’s new



Officers Chad Clauson, Brant Richardson, Mike Larson, Joe Spark and Mike Vonderharr pose with their canine partners.

partner, Riggs, *see left*, has been on the job since June.

“Most dogs work seven or eight years,” Larson said. “Paso loved to work, even when he developed cancer. He worked up until the day he died.”

According to Larson, tracking is a game to the dogs.

“These aren’t mean dogs, they are very friendly,” Larson said. “They enjoy tracking and receive lots of praise.”

Not only are the dogs recognized for their work, at the end of their shifts, they get to go home with their handlers. A total of 20 canines have worked for the City since the program began. Their images and years of service are recorded in a series of plaques at the police department.

With the help of a grant from the Bloomington Crime Prevention Association, the City installed an agility training course for the dogs in 2010.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE  
ANNUAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP  
RETREAT MOTIVATES AND  
EMPOWERS YOUNG PEOPLE

The Fourth Annual Youth Leadership Retreat, for Bloomington youth ages 15 - 21, takes place **Friday, March 2, 3 - 8 p.m.**, at Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road.

Sponsored by the Human Rights Commission, the event features keynote speaker Patrick Perez.

Bullied as a kid, Perez found an outlet in break dancing. His “Break Through Project” dance and leadership workshop will get students moving and teach them ways to grow their leadership skills.

Reservations are required. For more information, call 952-563-4944 V/TTY.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: YOUTH RETREAT.

STAY CONNECTED  
THE ART OF SOCIAL  
NETWORKING AND MEDIA

Join Human Services for a special lunch event featuring University of Minnesota Associate Professor Elizabeth Lightfoot, **Monday, March 26, 11:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.**, at Creekside Community Center, 9801 Penn Avenue South.

Lightfoot will teach attendees about social media and its many uses. Lunch will be provided.

To register, call 952-563-4948 or 952-563-4944 V/TTY, e-mail [reservations@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:reservations@ci.bloomington.mn.us) or visit Human Services at Creekside.



SHARE YOUR CULTURE  
JOIN THE GLOBAL CELEBRATION

Food vendors and entertainers representing authentic world cultures are invited to request an application form for consideration for the 5th annual Global Celebration. The event will be held **Saturday, June 16**, at Bloomington Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road.

Always a great time, attendees will enjoy a kaleidoscope of entertainment, exhibits, food, and activities for children. The event coincides with the Farmers Market and brings more than 3,000 people together in celebration each year.

For more information or to obtain an application form, call 952-563-8877 or 952-563-8740 TTY.

CORRECTION

A December *Briefing* Human Services insert article incorrectly referred to Martin Luther Care Center by its previous name, Martin Luther Manor.

HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS AND EVENTS



[Sign up for Human Services’ monthly e-mail newsletters](#) by scanning the QR code at right.



CARING FOR OUR CITIZENS

Human Services provides exceptional programs and services to community members of all ages, some of which are described below, but all of which are contained in the Human Services *Community Resource Catalog*. You can learn about housing, financial and health services, recreation opportunities, and more. Pick up your catalog at Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road or Creekside Community Center, 9801 Penn Avenue South, or find it online.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: RESOURCE CATALOG.

For more information, call Human Services at 952-563-8733 or TTY 952-563-8740. To sign up for e-mail updates scan the QR code at right or go to our website, click on [E-Subscribe](#) and subscribe to “Human Services.”

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: HUMAN SERVICES.



FREE TAX PREPARATION SERVICES  
HUMAN SERVICES OFFERS INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE

Tax assistance will be provided through April 14 to individuals who meet income-qualifying guidelines of \$30,000 or less for individuals and \$50,000 or less for families.

Help is provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Eligibility requirements must be met. **AccountAbility Minnesota** will only be available to provide tax assistance to qualifying individuals.

When: Tuesdays and Thursdays through April 17.  
Time: 5:30 - 9:30 p.m.  
When: Saturdays through April 14.  
Time: 8:30 am - 1:30 pm.

**AARP Tax-Aide** will provide free tax preparation services for middle- to low-income taxpayers, with special attention to people age 60 and older.

When: Mondays and Tuesdays through April 17.

Time: 9 a.m. - noon.

Taxpayers with complex tax returns are advised to seek paid tax assistance.

Human Services is partnering with AccountAbility Minnesota and AARP Tax-Aide to make these programs available.

For more information, contact Human Services.



TAX FORMS AVAILABLE

Federal tax forms are available to be photocopied at Creekside.





Contact Parks and Recreation at 952-563-8877 for more information on these events.

## SUMMER SOFTBALL PLAY AMERICA’S FAVORITE GAME



Registrations are being accepted for summer adult softball leagues, including men’s, women’s and co-rec. Beginning April 30, more than 300 teams will compete throughout the summer and fall at recreational and competitive levels.

Leagues are hosted at playfields Dred Scott, 10820 Bloomington Ferry Road, and Valley View, 9000 Portland Avenue South. Leagues are for adults, ages 18 and older. Single game leagues play 10 games a season and double-header leagues play 20 games a season.

All teams are sanctioned in the ASA and USSSA.

When: Monday - Friday, starting April 30.  
Cost: \$555 + tax, per team, Single Game Leagues.  
\$785 + tax, per team, Double Header Leagues.  
Deadline: March 12.

## WANT YOUR DOG TO RUN FREE? USE ONLY DESIGNATED OFF- LEASH AREAS



The City has designated a 25-acre expanse of land on 111th Street between Nesbitt and Hampshire avenues as an off-leash dog area. This is the only public area in the city where dogs may be off leash. All dogs in the off-leash area must be licensed by the City of Bloomington.

To ensure a pleasant experience for all who use the off-leash area, dog handlers should:

- Closely supervise their dogs and be within view.
- Have leashes in hand at all times.
- Clean up after their dogs.
- Supervise children.
- Leash dogs while entering and exiting the area.

The City is exploring additional sites for off-leash dog areas. For more information, contact Assistant Parks and Recreation Manager Greg Boatman at 952-563-8899 or [gboatman@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:gboatman@ci.bloomington.mn.us).

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: OFF LEASH.

# HEALTHY LIVING MADE EASY

## GET OUT AND ACTIVE THIS SUMMER

### SPEND SOME QUALITY TIME AT THE POOL BUY A BLOOMINGTON FAMILY AQUATIC CENTER (BFAC) SEASON PASS

Don’t miss out. Buy your BFAC resident season pass before April 13 to receive \$2 off or prior to June 9 to receive \$1 off.\* If you bring your old pass to be reactivated, you’ll receive an additional dollar off. Passes are sold at the Parks and Recreation counter at Bloomington Civic Plaza, beginning March 17 through June 8. Beginning June 6, passes will be available daily, 4 - 7 p.m., at the BFAC, 301 East 90th Street. BFAC is open **June 9 - August 19** and weekends through Labor Day.

*\*Season passes for those under 18 years old must be purchased by a legal guardian.*



2012 RESIDENT SEASON PASS (PRICES INCLUDE TAX)	
Infant, age 1 and under	Free
Child, age 2 - 10	\$16.25
Young adult, age 11 - 15	\$27.50
Adult, age 16 - 54	\$50.50
Senior, age 55 and up	\$16.25

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: AQUATIC CENTER.

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS SUMMER SPECTRUM SUPER SATURDAY

Register for youth programs online or in person on Super Sign-Up Saturday. Look for more details in the Summer Spectrum program brochure.

When: Saturday, March 17, 9 - 10 a.m.  
Where: Bloomington Civic Plaza,  
1800 West Old Shakopee Road.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: SUMMER SPECTRUM.



### GET MOVING WITH L’IL FLIPSTERS GYMNASTICS PROGRAM PROVIDES FITNESS AND FUN

L’il Flipsters Gymnastics is designed especially for children, ages 30 months to kindergarten. This mobile gymnastics organization provides gymnastics training and motor skill development in a safe, fun and nurturing environment. New sessions begin every month through May 2012.

Classes are held at Bloomington Ice Garden, 3600 West 98th Street, Tuesday and Friday mornings and Tuesday afternoons. Classes are \$30 per three-week session, \$40 for a four-week session and \$50 for a five-week session.

WEBSITE KEYWORD: FLIPSTERS.



### HUNTING EGGS IS FUN DON’T MISS THIS ANNUAL FAMILY EVENT

Kids, age eight and younger, won’t want to miss this “eggs”traordinary annual event sponsored by Bloomington Parks and Recreation and the Bloomington Breakfast Optimist Club. While you’re there, check out the family fun walk, informational booths and musical entertainment.

When: Saturday, April 7,  
9:30 a.m. - noon.  
Time: Hunt begins 11 a.m.  
Where: Normandale Lake  
Bandshell,  
5901 West 84th Street.



## PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

### FOR SAFER STREETS THE BLOOMINGTON FATAL CRASH REVIEW COMMITTEE

To address traffic safety concerns following a serious injury or fatality, the Bloomington Fatal Crash Review Committee analyzes the incident and formulates options to reduce future occurrences. The committee was formed in fall 2009 with the help of a Minnesota Office of Traffic Safety grant. Members include City employees from Public Health, Police, Traffic Engineering and

Risk Management, and City partner organizations, such as Safe and Drug Free Schools, Child Passenger Safety and the Tri-City Partners Coalition.

Become a fan of the City on Facebook for updates on the committee’s work and safety tips.



For more information, contact Public Health’s Carolyn Anderson at [clbanderson@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:clbanderson@ci.bloomington.mn.us) or 952-563-8989.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: FATAL CRASH REVIEW.

### TAKE THIS TO HEART HAVE YOUR CHOLESTEROL CHECKED

When was the last time you had your cholesterol checked? Knowing your fasting lipid profile, including your cholesterol, can help you prevent heart disease and lower your chance of having a heart attack.



If it has been five years or more since your last fasting lipid profile, Public Health recommends having one done now. If it has been less than five years, you may also need a lipid profile if you fall into any of the following categories:

- Your total cholesterol is 200 mg/dL or more.
- You are a man over the age of 45 or a woman over the age of 50.

- Your HDL (good) cholesterol is less than 40 mg/dL.
- You have other risk factors.

Our Health Assessment Clinics will help you decide if you need to consult with your doctor. Clinics are offered **February 14, June 12 and October 9, 7:30 - 10 a.m.**, at Bloomington Public Health, 1900 West Old Shakopee Road. For more information, call 952-563-8900.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: HEALTH RISK.



## FUN ON ICE

LEARN TO SKATE AT  
BLOOMINGTON ICE GARDEN  
(BIG)

**W**ant to learn how to skate? BIG offers skating lessons year-round, for people of all ages and abilities. From basic skating to hockey skills, BIG offers a variety of classes in an exceptional learning environment.

Registration is required. For more information, contact BIG at 952-563-8842 or visit the City's website.

**WEBSITE KEYWORD: BIG.**

## OUT AND ABOUT

KICK-START YOUR WINTER  
FITNESS AND FAMILY FUN AT  
RICHARDSON NATURE CENTER

**T**ake your sledding up a notch with kicksledding at Richardson Nature Center, 8737 East Bush Lake Road, **Saturday, February 4**, and **Sunday, February 12, 2 - 3:30 p.m.**

The kicksled or "spark," which means "to kick" in Norwegian/Swedish, is a small sled with a chair mounted on a pair of flexible metal runners. Kicksledding is a new and growing sport that you can participate in even when there is little or no snow on the ground.

Come to the nature center on **Friday, February 24**, and enjoy a family fun night outdoors. Listen for owls, look for animal tracks or just relax by a campfire.

Reservations are required. Cost is \$5 per person for both events.

For more information and reservations, call 763-559-6700 or visit

[www.threeriversparks.org](http://www.threeriversparks.org).



## THE CITY MAKES TRAVEL PLANNING EASY

## APPLY FOR YOUR PASSPORT AT BLOOMINGTON CIVIC PLAZA

**A**re there travel plans in your future? Perhaps a spring break trip or vacation overseas to a sunny destination? The City Clerk's Office is a designated Passport Acceptance Facility to process passport applications and passport photo services, located at 1800 West Old Shakopee Road.

This service is available Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. Applicants must arrive by or before 4 p.m. to allow enough time for processing. For more information, call 952-563-4923 or visit the City's website.

**WEBSITE KEYWORDS: PASSPORT SERVICES.**

## CENTER FOR THE ARTS

**L**ocated in Bloomington Civic Plaza at the corner of West 98th Street and Old Shakopee Road, the Center for the Arts is a first-class facility housing seven arts organizations. For facility information, call 952-563-8889. For exhibit information and events, visit [www.bloomingtonartcenter.com](http://www.bloomingtonartcenter.com) and click on Exhibitions, or call 952-563-8575.

## GALLERY HOURS

Hours:	M - F	8 a.m. - 10 p.m.
	Sa	9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
	Su	1 - 10 p.m.

For all theater tickets,  
call the Box Office at 952-563-8575.

**WEBSITE KEYWORDS:**  
**CENTER FOR THE ARTS.**

## INEZ GREENBERG GALLERY

## ART IN THE HOME – GOES GREEN



*Movement in  
Jerry's Oak by  
Paul Klein.*

Coinciding with the Home Improvement Fair, *see page 3*, this exhibit features artist-created furniture and home accessories made from recycled, repurposed, or otherwise sustainable materials, **February 23 - April 6**. Artists' reception is Thursday, March 29, 7 p.m.

## ATRIUM GALLERY

## I REMEMBER THE 1950s

This black-and-white photography exhibit, featuring the works of Richard Thorud, runs through **March 4**.

## UNRAVEL

Featuring the oil paintings of artist Laura Andrews, this exhibit runs **March 8 - April 29**.

*Suburban Sublime  
by Laura Andrews.*



## SCHNEIDER THEATER



## FRANKIE WENT TO HOLLYWOOD

Arne Fogel, Maud Hixson and Reeves Cary present the music of Frank Sinatra, **Saturday, February 18, 7:30 p.m.** Tickets are \$22 adults; \$19 seniors and \$16 students.

ANGELICA CANTANTI YOUTH  
CHOIRS BENEFIT CONCERT

The Angelica Cantanti Youth Choir and alumni present a special event, **Sunday, February 26, 3 p.m.**, to support a scholarship fund established in honor of Rita Docter's 25 years of dedicated leadership.

Tickets are \$25 and include a dessert reception.



## SHALL WE DANCE?

The Medalist Concert Band presents a variety of dance music, from the minuet to the mambo, **Sunday, March 4, 4 p.m.**

Tickets are \$12 adults; \$10 seniors/ students.

TASTE  
OF  
CHOCOLATE

BENEFITTING THE BLOOMINGTON FINE ARTS COUNCIL

2011 TASTE OF  
CHOCOLATE WINNER

"Sofya" an apricot, honey and chocolate desert with a touch of saffron, created by Patisserie Margo in Edina.

**Sunday, March 11, noon - 4 p.m.**  
**Bloomington Center for the Arts**  
**1800 West Old Shakopee Road**

**T**aste of Chocolate is an annual dessert competition and benefit for Bloomington arts organizations. It is presented in partnership with the Bloomington Chamber of Commerce and sponsored by *Minnesota Monthly*, Kraus Anderson, Bloomington Convention and Visitors Bureau, Larkin Hoffman Attorneys, Mall of America, The Toro Company, HealthPartners, Virginia Padden Photography, Xcel Energy and Burt's Disposal. Taste of Chocolate was voted "Best Food Festival of 2011" by *CityPages*.

Enjoy chocolates by chefs and chocolatiers, entertainment, a silent auction and a raffle drawing for extraordinary prizes.

Tickets are \$25 in advance; \$30 at the door. To purchase tickets, stop by the Bloomington Center for the Arts, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, call 952-563-8562 or visit [www.tasteofchocolate.org](http://www.tasteofchocolate.org).

For more information, call Bloomington Fine Arts Council at 952-563-8567 or visit [www.bloomingtonfinearts.com](http://www.bloomingtonfinearts.com).

DON'T MISS THIS!  
RAFFLE DRAWING FOR  
EXTRAORDINARY PRIZES

This year's raffle drawing will feature exciting prizes, including a \$500 Mall of America shopping spree, Toro snowblower, and \$1,000 cash courtesy of Larkin Hoffman Attorneys and Bloomington Convention and Visitors Bureau.



**Larkin  
Hoffman**  
ATTORNEYS



## THE 39 STEPS

Bloomington Civic Theater presents this fast-paced comedy packed with nonstop laughs and a cast of four playing more than 150 characters, **March 16 - April 7**. Directed by Zach Curtis. Tickets are \$18 adults; \$16 seniors/students.



HELPING YOUR HOME TO SHINE

LEARN ABOUT HOME IMPROVEMENT LOANS

The Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) is accepting applications through March 9 for its Home Improvement Deferred Loan Program. Loans of up to \$35,000 are available to Bloomington homeowners. There are no monthly payments. Repayment occurs when the home is sold, transferred or conveyed. Interest is charged at an annual rate of 4 percent of the original loan principal for the first 10 years. No additional interest accrues after 10 years.

A lead risk assessment is required for all homes built before 1978.

The loans help maintain the condition of housing and neighborhoods. Applications are ranked and processed according to the owner’s financial need. Eligible repairs include replacing roofs, electrical, heating and plumbing systems, gutters, windows, doors, insulation, siding, soffits and fascia, exterior painting, and foundation, sidewalk or step repairs.

Ineligible repairs include decorating, additions, finishing basements, remodeling and garage construction.

To apply for a Home Improvement Deferred Loan, you must be the owner-occupant of your home and have sufficient equity to cover the loan amount. Income guidelines apply. See table below.



INCOME GUIDELINES

1	\$45,500
2	\$52,000
3	\$58,500
4	\$65,000
5	\$70,200
6	\$75,400
7	\$80,600
8 or more	\$85,800

Includes all residents of household, related and unrelated, including renters. Subject to change.

Loan applications will be accepted at the HRA office in Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, until **Friday, March 9**. For more information or to receive an application, visit our website or call the HRA at 952-563-8937.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: HOME LOANS.

MEET A VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER  
GETTING TO KNOW JAY FORSTER

Assistant Fire Chief Jay Forster has been a volunteer firefighter in Bloomington for nearly 20 years. A St. Louis Park police sergeant, Forester recently completed the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Executive Fire Officer Program. The intensive program is designed to provide senior fire officials with a broad perspective on the various facets of fire administration.



**Q Why is advanced training so important?** *Every fire’s different. In a stressful situation, you refer right back to how you’ve been trained. It also gives you the leadership skills you need to be in higher positions, while the research work can help you both with solving present issues and preventing future ones.*

**Q How long have you been with St. Louis Park Police?** *I’ve been with St. Louis Park since 1997. It takes up more of my time, but I have a favorable schedule that allows me to have multiple days off in a row each week.*

**Q How do you balance work, firefighting and family?** *I’m lucky that my full-time job is fairly flexible. It can be difficult to juggle both jobs at the same time, but it is more so for my family. I have a wife and two kids and parents who are all very supportive of what I do. My family is most important to me, so I work very hard to make sure my time is balanced.*

**Q Do you have a scariest moment on the job?** *Once there was a fire in a garage. We were attacking it through the house and had some issues with the door going from the house to the garage, as well as some issues getting water. For a moment, we were completely surrounded by fire on all sides. We got out of it by closing the door, shutting off the source.*

**Q Do you have any hobbies?** *During my time off I enjoy taking short camping trips and vacations with my family to the North Shore or Wisconsin Dells. I also enjoy doing work around the house, especially landscaping. I used to play sports, but now I just teach my kids.*



BECOME A VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER

Bloomington’s volunteer firefighters include accountants, insurance sales people, computer technicians, mechanics, stay-at-home parents and the self-employed.

Visit our website for more information on making a difference by becoming a volunteer firefighter.

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: FIRE VOLUNTEERS.



THE NATURE OF FIRE  
LEARN THE BASICS

According to the U.S. Fire Administration, there were approximately 2,555 deaths and 13,275 serious injuries involving residential fires in 2010.

Bloomington Fire Prevention believes that fire deaths can be reduced by teaching the basic facts about fire. Below are some facts to keep in mind:

- Fire is FAST. In less than 30 seconds a small flame can turn into a major fire and fill a house with black smoke. In minutes, a house can be engulfed in flames.
- Fire is HOT. Heat is more dangerous than flames. A fire’s heat alone can kill. Room temperatures in a fire can be 100 degrees at floor level and rise to 600 degrees at five - six feet above the floor level.
- Fire is DARK. Fire starts bright, but quickly produces black smoke and complete darkness.
- Fire is DEADLY. Smoke and toxic gases kill more people than flames. Fire uses up the oxygen and produces smoke and poisonous gases.

In the event of a fire every second counts, so escape first; then call for help. For more information, contact Fire Marshal Gene Dugal at 952-563-8967 or [gdugal@ci.bloomington.mn.us](mailto:gdugal@ci.bloomington.mn.us).

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: FIRE PREVENTION.

GROWING SOME GREEN  
ANNUAL TREE SALE ADDS HUNDREDS OF TREES TO LANDSCAPE

Each year, the City plants trees in parks and other public areas to ensure that Bloomington’s urban forest continues to be one of the community’s treasures. The City has planted more than 1,000 trees over the last few years. To increase the number of trees on private properties, Park Maintenance holds an annual public tree sale. Based on last year’s sales, 300 trees will be available for purchase this spring.

TREE ORDER FORM

Bloomington residents only. All trees are bare-root, one-and-a-quarter to one-and-a-half inches in diameter and cost \$50 each. *Trees are not guaranteed.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Fill in number of each tree type desired. Maximum 5 trees total per household, \$50 each. Check must accompany order.

____ Autumn Blaze red maple	____ Green Mountain sugar maple
____ Hackberry	____ Imperial honeylocust
____ Northwood red maple	____ Prairie Fire crab apple
____ River birch	____ Snowdrift crab apple

Total trees  X \$50 ea. = \$  Total cost

Pick up trees at 1800 West Old Shakopee Road on **Saturday, May 5, 9 - 11 a.m.**  
Send check and form to City of Bloomington, Park Maintenance,  
1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3027.



The City’s annual tree sale will provide a variety of tree species again this year, including: Autumn Blaze red maple, Green Mountain sugar maple, Hackberry, Imperial honeylocust, Northwood red maple, Prairie Fire crab apple, River birch, and Snowdrift crab apple.

Orders will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Trees are not guaranteed. Visit the City’s website for more information and a [printable order form](#).

WEBSITE KEYWORDS: TREE SALE.